

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

VARTAN DIXON,

Plaintiff,

vs.

CITY OF SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
SEATTLE CITY LIGHT, and 3"John Doe"
employees or former employees of the City of
Seattle,

Defendants.

No. C20-1838

KING COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
CAUSE NO. 20-2-16121-7 SEA

**NOTICE OF REMOVAL TO FEDERAL
COURT UNDER 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a)**

TO: The Clerk of the above-entitled Court; and

TO: Vartan Dixon, Plaintiff Pro Se:

Defendant City of Seattle, Seattle City Light, hereby gives notice that it is removing the above-referenced case to the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington on the grounds set forth below. Concurrently with this Notice of Removal, in accordance with Local Rules W.D. Wash. LCR 101(c), Defendant has filed the Verification of State Court Records referenced below.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL TO FEDERAL COURT UNDER 28
U.S.C. § 1441(a) (C20-1838) - 1

Peter S. Holmes
Seattle City Attorney
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2050
Seattle, WA 98104-7095
(206) 684-8200

I. SUMMARY OF STATE COURT PROCEEDINGS

1. Pro Se Plaintiff Vartan Dixon filed this action in King County Superior Court on November 2, 2020, where it was assigned Case No. 20-2-16121-7 SEA. *See* attached Complaint.

2. The matter was assigned to The Honorable David Keenan, and on November 2, 2020, the Court issued an Order Setting Civil Case Schedule, which is attached as Exhibit 1 to the Verification of State Court Records.

3. On November 2, 2020, a Summons addressed to “City of Seattle” and “John Does 1-3” was filed by Plaintiff, which is attached as Exhibit 2 to the Verification of State Court Records.

4. On November 2, 2020, a Case Information Cover Sheet was filed by Plaintiff, which is attached as Exhibit 3 to the Verification of State Court Records.

5. On December 1, 2020, the Presiding Judge issued an Order on Transfer of Individual Judge Assignment, reassigning this case to The Honorable Mafé Rajul, effective January 11, 2021. The order is attached as Exhibit 4 to the Verification of State Court Records.

6. On November 24, 2020, defense counsel Assistant City Attorney Katrina Kelly received an email from an attorney representing Mr. Dixon that stated, among other things, that “Mr. Dixon’s case has been filed.” Because no copy of the complaint was attached to the email, Ms. Kelly instructed staff to find out whether Mr. Dixon’s lawsuit had been served on the City of Seattle and to conduct a docket search in King County Superior Court. On November 25, 2020, Ms. Kelly received from staff a copy of Mr. Dixon’s complaint filed in King County Superior Court that had been retrieved following a docket search for his lawsuit. The City of Seattle had not been served with the lawsuit.

7. Upon information and belief, as of the date of this Notice of Removal, neither the City of Seattle, Seattle City Light, nor the individually named “John Doe” defendants have been properly served.

1 8. Defendant City of Seattle, Seattle City Light, entered a notice of appearance on
2 December 22, 2020; no answer has been filed. *See* Exhibit 5 to the Verification of State Court Records.

3 9. A copy of the King County Superior Court docket is attached as Exhibit 6 to the
4 Verification of State Court Records.

5 10. Upon information and belief, there have been no further state court proceedings in
6 this action.

7 **II. GROUNDS FOR REMOVAL**

8 11. Plaintiff's Complaint alleges, in paragraph 3 (page 7) that Defendant City of Seattle,
9 Seattle City Light, violated 42 U.S.C. §§ 1981 and 1983.

10 12. This Court has original jurisdiction over Plaintiff's claims invoking 42 U.S.C.
11 §§ 1981 and 1983 because they are claims arising under the "Constitution, laws, or treaties of the
12 United States" within the meaning of 28 U.S.C. § 1331. Accordingly, this action is subject to
13 removal to "the district court of the United States for the district and division embracing the place
14 where [the] action is pending." 28 U.S.C. § 1441(a). Pursuant to Local Rules W.D. Wash. LCR
15 3(e)(1), Defendant City of Seattle, Seattle City Light, is removing this case to the Western District
16 of Washington, Seattle Division, because it is removing this case from King County Superior Court.

17 13. Plaintiff also alleges claims arising under the laws of the State of Washington, as
18 stated in paragraphs 2 and 5 (page 7) of the Complaint, and the Seattle Municipal Code, as stated in
19 paragraph 4 (page 7) of the Complaint. Upon information and belief, those claims are so related to
20 Plaintiff's claims invoking 42 U.S.C. § 1981 that they form part of the same case or controversy, and
21 thus are within this Court's supplemental jurisdiction. 28 U.S.C. § 1367(a).

22 14. "[A]ll defendants who have been properly joined and served must join in or consent
23 to the removal of the action." 28 U.S.C. § 1446(B)(2)(A) (emphasis added). Here, the three

individual defendants are referenced only as “John Doe” and, as such, are not even identified, let alone properly served. Although the City of Seattle has not yet been served, out of an abundance of caution, it seeks removal of the case to Federal Court within 30 days of becoming aware of the lawsuit. 28 U.S.C. § 1446(b)(1) (“The notice of removal of a civil action or proceeding shall be filed within 30 days after the receipt by the defendant, through service or otherwise, of a copy of the initial pleading . . .”) (emphasis added).

For all the reasons stated above, Defendant City of Seattle, Seattle City Light, hereby gives notice that the civil action in King County Superior Court, State of Washington has been removed from that Court to the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington at Seattle.

DATED this 23rd day of December, 2020.

PETER S. HOLMES
Seattle City Attorney

By: s/ Katrina R. Kelly
KATRINA R. KELLY, WSBA #28435
Assistant City Attorney
Ph: (206) 684-8610
katrina.kelly@seattle.gov

By: s/ Sarah L. Lee
SARAH L. LEE, WSBA #27364
Assistant City Attorney
Ph: (206) 684-5683
sarah.lee@seattle.gov

Seattle City Attorney’s Office
701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2050
Seattle, WA 98104-7095
Fax: (206) 684-8284

Attorneys for Defendant
City of Seattle, Seattle City Light

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that, on this date, I caused a true and correct copy of the foregoing document to be served on Pro Se Plaintiff by sending it out for personal delivery, and also emailed the documents, addressed to:

Vartan Dixon
25515 137th Place SE
Kent, WA 98042
Ph: (206) 235-0535
Vartan4speedz@gmail.com.

Dated this 23rd day of December, 2020, in Seattle, King County, Washington.

s/ Kim Fabel
KIM FABEL
Legal Assistant